

Message Text

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C O N F I D E N T I A L AMMAN 07169

E.O. 11652:GDS
TAGS: OVIP, JO, EG, IS (STAPLETON, RUTH CARTER)

SUBJECT: TRAVEL OF RUTH CARTER STAPLETON

1. RUTH CARTER STAPLETON, HER HUSBAND AND THREE COMPANIONS HAD SHORT BUT VERY USEFUL VISIT TO JORDAN SEPT. 11 - 12, 1978. SHE BEGAN VISIT BY CROSSING ALLENBY BRIDGE OVER THE JORDAN RIVER; SHE WAS GREETED ON THE EAST BANK BY THE GOVERNOR OF BALQA, THE BRIDGE COMMANDER, AND PALACE AND OTHER JORDANIAN OFFICIALS IN ADDITION TO AN EMBASSY REPRESENTATIVE. THE GOVERNMENT OF JORDAN PROVIDED TWO HELICOPTERS TO TAKE MRS. STAPLETON AND HER GROUP TO PETRA, WHERE THEY SPENT THE MORNING TOURING THE NABATEAN RUINS. THEY HAD A LATE LUNCH THERE OF A MENSEF, A TRADITIONAL BEDOUIN FEAST.

2. AT 1800 HOURS, SHORTLY AFTER ARRIVING IN AMMAN FROM PETRA, MRS. STAPLETON HELD A 35 MINUTE PRESS CONFERENCE ATTENDED BY JORDAN TELEVISION AND RADIO, JORDAN NEWS AGENCY AND WIRE SERVICE REPORTERS. SEVERAL QUESTIONS WERE ASKED ON SUBSTANCE OF CAMP DAVID TALKS, AND A PORTION OF
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PRESS CONFERENCE WAS USED BY TWO JOURNALISTS AS PLATFORM FOR STATEMENTS ON THEIR PERSONAL VIEWS ON PALESTINIAN ISSUE. MRS. STAPLETON HANDLED QUESTIONS AND STATEMENTS WITH CONSIDERABLE FINESSE AND GRACE AND SUCCEEDED IN IMPRESSING ON GROUP THAT HER PRIVATE VISIT TO THE AREA HAD GIVEN HER INSIGHT INTO THE HUMAN PROBLEMS THE PEOPLE OF THE AREA FACE. SHE ADDED THAT PRESIDENT CARTER HAD

EXPRESSED HIS PLEASURE THAT SHE WAS ABLE TO MAKE THIS TRIP AT THIS PARTICULAR TIME.

3. DR. AND MRS. STAPLETON, ACCOMPANIED BY DCM SUDDARTH, HELD PRIVATE DISCUSSION WITH CROWN PRINCE HASSAN (WHO IS REGENT DURING KING HUSSEIN'S ABSENCE) AT HIS OFFICE IN BASMAN PALACE IMMEDIATELY FOLLOWING PRESS CONFERENCE. DURING HOUR MEETING, CROWN PRINCE DISCUSSED BACKGROUND OF ARAB-ISRAELI ISSUES AND GAVE JORDAN'S VIEWS ON CURRENT ISSUES. MRS. STAPLETON EXPRESSED HER SPECIAL APPRECIATION FOR SUBSTANTIVE BRIEFING GIVEN HER BY CROWN PRINCE.

4. PRINCESS BASMAH, YOUNGER SISTER OF KING HUSSEIN AND CROWN PRINCE HASSAN, HOSTED AN INFORMAL DINNER FOR MRS. STAPLETON AND HER ACCOMPANYING PARTY IMMEDIATELY AFTER MEETING WITH CROWN PRINCE. AMB, DCM AND THEIR WIVES ALSO ATTENDED. DINNER PROVIDED EXCELLENT OPPORTUNITY FOR MEMBERS OF ROYAL FAMILY TO GET TO KNOW DR. AND MRS. STAPLETON ON PERSONAL LEVEL.

5. TO SUM UP, WE BELIEVE VISIT WAS SUCCESSFUL FROM POINT OF VIEW OF MRS. STAPLETON AS WELL AS FROM PERSPECTIVE OF EMBASSY AND GOVERNMENT OF JORDAN. VELIOTES

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